

Notice of Allowability

Application No.

10/781,352

Applicant(s)

ZHANG ET AL.

Examiner

Donald L. Storm

Art Unit

2626

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address--

All claims being allowable, PROSECUTION ON THE MERITS IS (OR REMAINS) CLOSED in this application. If not included herewith (or previously mailed), a Notice of Allowance (PTOL-85) or other appropriate communication will be mailed in due course. **THIS NOTICE OF ALLOWABILITY IS NOT A GRANT OF PATENT RIGHTS.** This application is subject to withdrawal from issue at the initiative of the Office or upon petition by the applicant. See 37 CFR 1.313 and MPEP 1308.

1. ☒ This communication is responsive to correspondence filed February 17, 2004 through September 2, 2005.
2. ☒ The allowed claim(s) is/are 1-10.
3. ☒ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
- a) ☒ All b) ☐ Some* c) ☐ None of the:
- ☒ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
 - ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
 - ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this national stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

* Certified copies not received: _____.

Applicant has THREE MONTHS FROM THE "MAILING DATE" of this communication to file a reply complying with the requirements noted below. Failure to timely comply will result in ABANDONMENT of this application.

THIS THREE-MONTH PERIOD IS NOT EXTENDABLE.

4. ☐ A SUBSTITUTE OATH OR DECLARATION must be submitted. Note the attached EXAMINER'S AMENDMENT or NOTICE OF INFORMAL PATENT APPLICATION (PTO-152) which gives reason(s) why the oath or declaration is deficient.
5. ☐ CORRECTED DRAWINGS (as "replacement sheets") must be submitted.
- (a) ☐ including changes required by the Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948) attached
- 1) ☐ hereto or 2) ☐ to Paper No./Mail Date _____.
- (b) ☐ including changes required by the attached Examiner's Amendment / Comment or in the Office action of Paper No./Mail Date _____.
- Identifying indicia such as the application number (see 37 CFR 1.84(c)) should be written on the drawings in the front (not the back) of each sheet. Replacement sheet(s) should be labeled as such in the header according to 37 CFR 1.121(d).
6. ☐ DEPOSIT OF and/or INFORMATION about the deposit of BIOLOGICAL MATERIAL must be submitted. Note the attached Examiner's comment regarding REQUIREMENT FOR THE DEPOSIT OF BIOLOGICAL MATERIAL.

Attachment(s)

- | | |
|--|---|
| 1. <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Notice of References Cited (PTO-892) | 5. <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Informal Patent Application |
| 2. <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948) | 6. <input type="checkbox"/> Interview Summary (PTO-413),
Paper No./Mail Date _____ |
| 3. <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Information Disclosure Statements (PTO/SB/08),
Paper No./Mail Date _____ | 7. <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Examiner's Amendment/Comment |
| 4. <input type="checkbox"/> Examiner's Comment Regarding Requirement for Deposit
of Biological Material | 8. <input type="checkbox"/> Examiner's Statement of Reasons for Allowance |
| | 9. <input type="checkbox"/> Other _____ |

EXAMINER'S AMENDMENT

1. An examiner's amendment to the record appears below. Should the changes and/or additions be unacceptable to the Applicant, an amendment may be filed as provided by 37 CFR § 1.312. To ensure consideration of such an amendment, it MUST be submitted no later than the payment of the issue fee. Authorization for this examiner's amendment was given in a telephone interview with Mr. Robert Blackmon, Attorney of Record, on July 3, 2007.

The application has been amended as follows:

IN THE CLAIMS:

In claim 10, line 11, change "the LLR" to --a log likelihood ratio (LLR)--.

Allowable Subject Matter

2. Claims 1-10 are allowed.

3. The following is a statement of reasons for the indication of allowable subject matter:

Claims 1 and 10, and by dependency claims 2-9, require tracking power to determine a first range of signals to be considered as noise and a second range of signals to be considered as voice to use with the power levels to calculate a log-likelihood ratio to determine a threshold that differentiates between noise and voice. The allowable subject matter of the claims resides in the whole structure and interaction expressed by the combination of all limitations compared to the prior art of record. The closest prior art that was found (Skoglund, Zhang, Krasny et al.) describes use of a (log) likelihood ratio to produce an estimate of whether or not a signal is a speech signal or noise. Those references do not track power and predefine ranges to consider the signal as speech or noise. No particular reference provides relevant, objective evidence to make the claimed apparatus and method obvious by changing the closest prior art to include determining a threshold using an LLR, particularly with tracking minimum and maximum power levels.

Information Disclosure Statement

4. A copy of the International Search Report (Form PCT/ISA/210) (received February 18, 2005) is present. The search report and its cited documents have been considered by the Examiner.

5. A copy of the Written Opinion of the International Searching Authority (Form PCT/ISA/237) (received February 18, 2005) is present.

Oath/Declaration

6. The declaration submitted by the Applicant was received on October 19, 2007.

Conclusion

7. The following references here made of record are considered pertinent to applicant's disclosure:

Aubert et al. [US Patent Application Publication 2004/0064314] describes speaker tracking and relates a likelihood ratio to probabilities for identifying one speaker.

8. Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Donald L. Storm, of Division 2626, whose telephone number is (571) 272-7614. The examiner can normally be reached on weekdays between 7:00 AM and 3:30 PM Eastern Time. If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Richemond Dorvil can be reached on (571) 272-7602.

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Inquiries regarding the status of submissions relating to an application or questions on the Private PAIR system should be directed to the

Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free) or 571-272-4100 between the hours of 6 a.m. and midnight Monday through Friday EST, or by e-mail at: ebc@uspto.gov. For general information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. If you would like assistance from a USPTO Customer Service Representative or access to the automated information system, call 800-786-9199 (IN USA OR CANADA) or 571-272-1000.

July 5, 2007

/Donald L. Storm/

Primary Patent Examiner
Division 2626